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THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY INC. GULL
MONTHLY BULLETIN

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MAY TRIP TO SONOMA COUNTY COAST

A Saturday trip to the Sonoma County coast was in order on the twelfth of May. The weather at the designated gathering point, Valley Ford, was beautiful but on the coast itself a strong northwest wind made birding unpleasant. The nature of a birder being what it is, however, the ten cars and 30 observers in the group somewhat stubbornly clung to their original schedule and saw quite a respectable list of species.

An extremely low tide, combined with the relentless winds, made for difficult, long-range observations at Bodega Bay. The distances to the shorebirds was particularly regrettable as those which were seen at close range exhibited much of their summer coloring. An albino Horned Grebe in the company of two in the normal breeding dress was a novel sight. Some grayish feathers on its back were the only breaks in an otherwise snowy plumage. At Salmon Creek a Golden Eagle, hotly pursued by two successive Red-tailed Hawks, was a welcome but fleeting sight as it rode the strong winds southward along a ridge parallel to the shore-line. At the first point south of Goat Rock close-up views of Pelagic Cormorants on their nesting cliff were obtained and a fine pair of Peregrine Falcons were seen.

The wind finally drove us off the coast and the dwindling party journeyed up the Russian River in search of Chats. A pair was ultimately located near Guerneville. A last effort to find White-tailed Kites was also successfully terminated a short distance west of Santa Rosa. The following 94 species were found: Common Loon, Arctic Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Brandt's Cormorant, Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, American Bittern, Black Brant, Mallard, Scaup (sp.?), Buffle-head, White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, White-tailed Kite, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, Osprey, Peregrine Falcon, Sparrow Hawk, California Quail, American Coot, Snowy Plover, Killdeer, Willet, Red-backed Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Sanderling, Northern Phalarope, Glaucous-winged Gull, Western Gull, California Gull, Pigeon Guillemot, Mourning Dove, Vaux's Swift, Allen's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Black Phoebe, Western Flycatcher, Western Wood Pewee, Horned Lark, Violet-green Swallow, Tree Swallow, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Purple Martin, Steller's Jay, Scrub Jay, Common Raven, American Crow, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Common Bushtit, Brown Creeper, Bewick's Wren, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Am. Robin, Swainson's (Russet-backed) Thrush,

Western Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, Loggerhead Shrike, Hutton's Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Pileolated Warbler, House Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Tri-colored Blackbird, Bullock's Oriole, Brewer's Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Purple Finch, House Finch, Pine Siskin, Am. Goldfinch, (Green-backed) Lesser Goldfinch, Spotted Towhee Brown Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Oregon Junco, White-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow. —GORDON L. BOLANDER, *Leader and Historian.*

OFFSHORE BOAT TRIPS ENCOUNTER ROUGH WATER BUT SOME GOOD BIRDS

I. May 27, 1956

Twenty participants in the cooperative charter-boat trip on this date boarded The Privateer at Berkeley Yacht Harbor before 5:40 a.m., and with four additional passengers picked up at San Franisco, the usual course was followed through the Golden Gate and toward the S.E. Farallon Island. While still in the Bay nothing of particular significance was seen, the bay waters being relatively devoid of bird-life at this sesan. While still within the Golden Gate a number of Murres were seen and hopes were high for a fine trip. However, just west of Point Bonita the seas were so rough, and the swells so high, that observing, at least with binoculars, was rather difficult. While some no doubt would have given up at that point, a majority of those aboard preferred to go on. Hence we continued, rough water and all (sometimes swirling on the deck), until we reached the island at 9:55 a.m. Except for frequent Murres and occasional groups of Brandt's Cormorants and the widespread Western Gulls, nothing of really "oceanic" interest was seen on the way out. At the island the usually calm area below the nesting colony of Brandt's Cormorants was too rough for laying-to, so the boat was kept under way slowly from there to the south end of the island while lunches were eaten. In addition to the many Cormorants, Western Gulls, Murres, and Pigeon Guillemots, one Tufted Puffin and one Cassin's Auklet were seen during this period, as well as the several hundred Northern Sea-Lions on their special off-shore islet.

The return trip was made *via* the San Francisco Ligtship (8½ miles out from the Golden Gate), and was relatively comfortable because of our travelling with the swells. Eyes strained still trying to find those shearwaters so mysteriously absent — at the season when many thousands have been encountered in other years. And there had been nothing else of note, either, — until we neared the Lightship when a single Black-footed Albatross came in and was coaxed close to the boat with a mixture of bacon-grease and corn "Kix" cereal as bait. Also here, and within a mile to the east, there were at least 5 Ashy Petrels foraging; and we maneuvered about among them for about a half-hour while everyone interested obtained excellent views of these rarely seen, but common, pelagic birds. These final two species added to our meager list alleviated the feeling of being "cheated" by the elements, and the return to the harbors was made with greater spirit.

The following 19 species were seen on the trip, the numbers given being the total tallied by me enroute between the Gate and the Island, unless otherwise mentioned: Arctic Loon, 1 (in Gate); Red-throated Loon, 1; Loon, sp.?, 1; Black-footed Albatross, 1; Sooty Shearwater (strangely NONE); Ashby Petrel, 5 or more; Brown Pelican, 1 (C. Sather); Double-crested Cormorant, 1

(A. L. Curl); Brandt's Cormorant, 45 (and thousands at the island); Pelagic Cormorant, 1 (and 300 at the island); Cormorant, sp.?, 35 (probably mostly Brandt's); Black-crowned Night Heron, 2 (near Alcatraz I.); Duck, sp.? (Scaup?), 5 (ALC); Phalarope, sp.?, 1; Glaucous-winged Gull, 1; Western Gull, 600 est. (and 2000 est. at the island); California Gull, 1; Common Murre, 85 (and 300 est. at the island and 1 *in* the Bay); Pigeon Guillemot, 150 at the island; Cassin's Auklet, 1 at the island; Tufted Puffin, 1 at the island; Barn Swallow, several at Berkeley Harbor.

— HOWARD L. COGSWELL, *Leader and Historian.*

II. June 3, 1956

A week following the trip described above, 18 passengers embarked on the Rowland R Sr. from the Berkeley Yacht Harbor and 10 more were picked up at San Francisco — the registration for the spring offshore trip as announced in the April Gull having been so great that this additional trip was scheduled. By the time we left San Francisco, many small fishing boats were returning to the Bay because of rough water and high winds outside the Gate; but the intrepid birders voted unanimously to try for the islands.

The trip out was rough and wet, the only redeeming feature being the close views of two Albatrosses about 10 miles offshore. We reached the island about 11:00 a.m. and broke out of the heavy gray overcast and high swells into a beautiful blue and relatively smooth sea in the lee of the island. Bird life there was abundant and exciting (numbers, not species): great concentrations of Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants, hundreds of Murres, and more Pigeon Guillemots than anyone aboard had ever seen at one time before. Several Tufted Puffins were seen, but Cassin's Auklets were no where to be found. The trip home was smooth and sunny (many birders asleep on the deck), and was highlighted by another very close view of an Albatross and a fine view of a Parasitic Jaeger. The following 13 species were seen: Arctic Loon, 2; Black-footed Albatross, 4; Pink-footed Shearwater, 2 or 3; Brown Pelican, 1; Brandt's Cormorant; Pelagic Cormorant; White-winged Scoter, 2; Black Oyster-catcher, 2; Parasitic Jaeger, 1; Western Gull; Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Tufted Puffin, 15. — LEE STALLCUP, *Leader and Historian.*

OBSERVATIONS

A *Correction* is in order, Dr. A. S. Campbell writes, on the Arctic Loon reported by him at Saint Mary's College, May 12 - 15 (see The Gull, 38:27). The bird remained until the 17th and was collected, whereupon it was found to be a *Common Loon,* but 2½ inches shorter than average for that species and weighing 8½ pounds [normal weight — Ed.]. It was in mostly winter-type plumage, but showed a trace of a collar band and had flecks on the flanks under the wings. It is still a new species for the area.

Osprey, 1 on Apr. 1 at San Francisco Beach and 1 at Bon Tempe Lake, May 20; Spotted Owl, 3 heard on Mount Tamalpais, May 20; Northern Waterthrush, 1 at Lake Merced, May 9, observed closely; and Lawrence's Goldfinch, 4 at Olema on May 13 (all by Charles Hines, Jr., and E. Hase). Ospreys were also noted on May 21 at Searsville Lake and at Point Arena on May 28 (Emily D. Smith).

A male Calliope Hummingbird visited St. Albert's College, near College Ave. in Oakland, about April 16 (Brother Sylvester MacNutt), and one was seen in S. E. Berkeley, April 18 (Minnie Young).

JULY MEETING

The 466th regular meeting of the Golden Gate Audubon Society will be held on July 12th, following a six o'clock picnic supper at Live Oak Park Fireplace, near Shattuck and Berryman, Berkeley. Take the "F" train to Berryman. Bring your supper and interested friends. Coffee will be served. At 5:30 there will be a bird walk in the park led by Miss Jacque Watkins, hostess for the evening. The theme of the program will be "Experiences in Nature Far Afield". Members who have been travelling out of the state will share the highlights of their trips, limiting their talks to ten minutes. The evening will be concluded with a tour of the new buildings in the park and motion pictures in the Live Oak Little Theater. — LAUREL REYNOLDS, *Program Chairman.*

JULY WEEK-END FIELD TRIP

July 14th and 15th to Wrights Lake and Echo Summit areas, amid the Alpine meadows, Granite Domes and Tumbling streams of the Sierra Nevada.

Many beautiful birds of the Transition and Canadian zones may be seen.

Take Highway 50 from Sacramento through Placerville to 5 miles beyond Kyburz, then a dirt road leads left for 7½ miles to Wrights Lake, and a forest service campground.

Meet at the campground at 9:00 a.m., and 2:00 p.m., Saturday, and 8:00 a.m., Sunday.

Those desiring resort accomodations, can arrange a reasonable overnight stay at Alpine Lodge on Echo Summit, (about 15 miles away) by contacting — Bonnie Smith, 555 Dewey Boulevard, San Francisco, 16 — OV. 1-7635.

Campers, prepare for anything, especially for frigid nights. Trip Leader, Larry Curl, LA. 6-7004. — LEE STALLCUP, *Field Trips Chairman.*

NEW MEMBERS

The Golden Gate Audubon Society welcomes the following new members: from Albany, Miss Blanche Vranna; from Berkeley, Miss Jean Nelson, Mrs. F. Nadine Frazee, Mrs. Orwell Logan, and Mrs. Phyllis A. Zweigart; from Oakland, Mrs. L. A. Witter; from San Francisco, Dr. George F. Sherman, Mrs. A. A. Herschler and Mr. H. W. Steinnegger. The total membership count is now 855. — JEAN L. DUNHAM, M.D., *Membership Chairman.*

EDITOR'S CORNER

The experienced assistance of Miss Minnie Young in preparing the copy of this issue of "The Gull" for the printer is deeply appreciated by the editor who was visiting Seattle and Vancouver at this critical time.

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Established January 25, 1917

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Vice President	Dr. T. Eric Reynolds	140 Estates Drive, Piedmont 11, AN 1-7121
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Claims for missing numbers of THE GULL should be sent to the Distribution Chairman. Changes of address should be sent to the Membership Chairman.

Monthly meetings second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint Membership, Local and National, $5.00 per year, includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and THE GULL. Subscription to THE GULL separately, $1.00 per year.

Branch of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, California Office — 2426 Bancroft Way Berkeley 4 — TH. 8-4042

ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY IN AUGUST

This year the Audubon Camp Scholarship Benefit Garden Party will be held at five o'clock on Sunday evening, August 26th, at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Eric Reynolds, Piedmont. The regular August meeting will precede the program.

The 1956 garden party bids fair to be the most enjoyable and financially successful of any yet held. We are going to have a BARBECUE, with the male members of the Board of Directors as CHEFS! There will be music in the garden during the supper hour, community singing with Larry Moore and Bert Harwell, and after darkness falls, one of the most unusual films that has ever been made—if the Program Committee can carry out the plans on which they are working.

In the past members have generously contributed the food for this party, and the sum which they paid at the gate $1.25 was a donation to the Camp Scholarship Fund. This year, the Social Committee felt that we would all enjoy a barbecue, having all the food prepared for us, (easier than making a casserole dish!!) paying $1.75 at the gate.

To buy the food for this *unusual* supper, prepared by some of the Bay Area's most distinguished citizens, we are depending on voluntary contributions from the membership. We anticipate such a generous response, that *all* our gate receipts may be turned over to the Camp Scholarship Benefit Fund. So send your check at once to Mrs. Virgil Muhler, 5774 Scarborough Drive, Oakland 11, the Garden Party Treasurer.

Reservation cards will be enclosed in the August "Gull". Plan to come and bring a prospective member as a guest.

— Bonnie Smith, *Social Chairman*